The Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Project at Northeastern University School of Law brings together lawmakers, lawyers, activists, researchers, journalists and the families of victims of racial homicides to study and redress the systemic failures of the mid-twentieth century criminal justice system. We engage in a form of legal archeology: recovering documents lost to history, examining the fault lines of each case, and conceptualizing continuities over time. Our students interview witnesses and family members, document their memories, and share official accounts of the events. We design remedial projects - including legal measures - that respond to the interests and aspirations of communities. CRRJ maintains the most comprehensive archive on racial homicides in the country, comprising records of federal, state and local law enforcement, civil rights groups, and state and federal courts, images and recorded histories. This year we partnered with archival and media experts to preserve our growing collection and render it accessible to researchers and the general public.

In 2015 we expanded our caseload, partnered for a second year with Southern University Law Center, developed fruitful academic initiatives with the School of Journalism and Library at Northeastern, and continued our work with Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School. Together with the School of Journalism, the Library, and NU Law Lab we won a grant to to develop a digital CRRJ.

And with the generous assistance of NUSL alumna Elizabeth Zitrin we established the Zitrin CRRJ Fellowship to support the participation in CRRJ’s program of a lawyer pursuing social justice lawyering and teaching.

This report covers many of the cases and projects that kept us busy in 2015.
CRRJ DOCKET 2015
Alabama

Lorenza Best, 32, was shot to death by police officers in Anniston in June 1950. Best, a life-long resident of Anniston, worked at the Southern Pipe & Supply Shop at the time of his death. Ed Craig, about 71, was shot to death by Bessemer police officer J.P. Helton in April 1949. Dennis Cross was lynched in September 1933 in Tuscaloosa by a mob of men impersonating police officers. Cross had been arrested for assaulting a woman. The Southern Commission on the Study of Lynching reported that it was very unlikely Cross could have committed the crime. He was kidnapped from proper authorities and lynched. CRRJ’s investigation of the Cross lynching is ongoing. Wesley Johnson, 18, was lynched in Tumbleton in February 1937. Although this case featured prominently in debates over the Wagner-Van Nuys anti-lynching bill in 1937, CRRJ’S investigation, which included interviews with Henry County community historians, is the first comprehensive account of the lynching. Johnson was visiting with a white young woman with whom he had a notorious and consensual romantic relationship when her husband discovered the couple. The white farmer for whom the lynch victim worked harbored him, but when an angry mob threatened the farmer’s family, he released Johnson to the sheriff. The mob broke into the jail, kidnapped Johnson and took him back to woman’s home. Two grand juries were convened to investigate the lynching, but no indictments were returned. (see featured cases). Moses Jones, 35, was shot to death by Sheriff Jenkins Hill of Clarke County in December 1953. In September 1953, Jones had testified on behalf of the government in a federal corruption case against Sheriff Hill and others. The law enforcement officers were accused of operating a bootleg liquor racket. After Sheriff Hill prevailed in the federal criminal case against him, Jones fled Clarke County in fear of his life and moved his family to Bessemer. Three months later, claiming Jones had defaulted on a Clarke County fine for selling illegal liquor, Sheriff Hill drove up to Bessemer to arrest Jones. Just as soon as he got him back to the Clarke County jail, the sheriff shot and killed Jones. Both state and federal authorities investigated Jones’ death. A Clarke County jury declined to indict its sheriff, and while a federal grand jury returned an indictment, that case against Sheriff Hill was dismissed in 1956.

From Time, January 11, 1954
“Races: A Shortage of Witnesses”

An hour before sunrise one day last week, Sheriff Jenkins Hill of Clarke County, Ala., drove up to a Thomasville undertaking parlor, swung open the back door of his new Chrysler, and told an attendant to get a “friend” out of the car. The attendant found the body of Moses Jones, a Negro, sprawled on the floor like “you would throw a dead hog.” Stocky Sheriff Hill explained he had been forced to kill Jones, a prisoner who had “grabbed me and attempted to get my gun.” There were no witnesses to confirm or refute the familiar story.
Ocie Knox, 33, was shot to death in Troy by police officer Dewey Kilpatrick. Knox lived in Tuscaloosa. CRRJ is seeking further information about this homicide.

**Lynching of Dan Pippen, Jr. and A.T. Harden, Tuscaloosa 1933.** Daniel Pippen, 18, A.T. Hardin, 15, and Elmore (Honey) Clark, 28, were arrested for the murder of a 21-year-old woman, Vaudine Maddox, who lived near the defendants. Each of the three accused had credible alibi testimony. At an early court appearance, the International Labor Defense attempted to put in an appearance for the defense, causing an uproar that spilled out onto the courthouse square, where a mob of about 2,000 gathered to protest the appearance of the ILD lawyers. The state militia had to escort the lawyers out of town. About two months after the arrest of the three defendants, a mob kidnapped them from Bibb County law enforcement officers, shot them and left them for dead. Miraculously, one of the three, Elmore Clark, survived and escaped. He was taken into custody, but ultimately released without trial. No one was ever tried for the murder of Vaudine Maddox, or charged in connection with the lynching of Pippen and Harden and attempted lynching of Clark. The local newspaper intimated that the lynching occurred because there was little confidence in the prosecutor’s office. CRRJ’s report is the first full account of the legal history of the case.

The *Tuscaloosa News* coverage included exhortations to the ILD to leave town. The article “*Lynch Lawyer*” *suit wins $1,499 verdict* reports on a civil lawsuit filed by a local lawyer appointed for one of the defendants. The lawyer claimed he was defamed by ILD’s description of him as a “lynch lawyer,” and he won a case against the telegraph company that carried the ILD’s allegedly defamatory statement.
George Floyd, 54, was beaten to death in jail in St. Augustine in October 1945. Floyd and his wife Rosa Floyd had been married for thirty years. The couple apparently had no children. Floyd was arrested in the city by one Officer Pacetti and charged with “public drunk.” His death certificate categorizes the death as an “accident” and describes the cause of death as “resisting officers of the law due to being hit with a blackjack.” A coroner’s jury concluded the killing was justifiable. Richard Hawkins and Ernest Ponder were lynched in Tallahassee in July 1937. Ponder was between the ages of 14 and 18, and Hawkins was 16 years old. The two boys were accused of breaking into a store in Tallahassee and then stabbing a police officer who arrived to investigate. The young men were arrested and housed at the county jail. Each accused the other of the assault on the officer. When a group of men sought to take the boys from the county jail, a city police officer allowed them to be kidnapped. Apparently while one of the boys stood by the other was shot to death. Their bodies were said to be riddled with bullets. Signs placed near the bodies read, “his last crime,” and “Negros (sic) next.” The FBI conducted an investigation. A coroner’s jury determined “hands unknown” were responsible for the killings. CRRJ is working with Tallahassee residents to create an accurate history of the Leon County jail, which remains standing, as a venue of injustice, not only for the three youths who were kiddnapped in 1937, but for scores of civil rights protesters who were wrongly detained at the site in the 1950s and 60s. Otis Price, 21, was lynched in Perry in August 1938. Price worked on a turpentine camp near Perry. While he was fetching water from a common well, he passed by a woman in a nearby bathhouse. The woman’s screams that Price assaulted her alerted neighbors. Although his wife urged him to flee, Price remained at the camp because, he said, he’d done nothing wrong. Sheriff S. L.Wilson quickly arrested Price. As Wilson was transporting Price to jail, a motorized mob forced him to give up his detainee. The mob shot Price in the presence of the sheriff and left him to die on the side of the road. A coroner’s jury concluded that Price had “come to his death by gunshot wounds inflicted by parties unknown.” A Taylor County grand jury came to a similar conclusion. When asked what crime Price had been charged with, Sheriff Wilson could not state whether the charge was insulting, attacking, or attempting
to rape the woman in the bathhouse. Margaret Bailey of the International Labor Defense organized much of the protest over the Price lynching. Richard Smoak and Charlie Smoak were lynched in 1931 in Blountstown. Richard was 23 and his brother Charlie was 15-years-old. The Smoak brothers got into a fight with a supervisor at the turpentine camp where they worked. They fled and were being driven to a new job at another camp when a group of men pulled them from the car. In the presence of their father, the assailants gunned down the younger boy and then his brother. A coroner’s jury found the two were killed by “parties unknown.” A state prosecutor, John H. Carter, Jr., investigated the case, but wrote that he was stymied because “the weak point is that the case rests upon negro testimony.” No one was ever prosecuted for the shooting deaths. The boys’ family fled immediately to Alabama. Lee Snell, 43, was taken from police custody and murdered in Daytona Beach in April 1939. Snell was a taxi driver. He was involved in an accident that caused the death of a 12-year-old boy. Snell was arrested and charged with motor vehicle homicide. As police officers transported Snell from one jail to another, the older brothers of the victim of the homicide, Earl Blackwelder and Everett Blackwelder, kidnapped Snell and shot him to death in the presence of the transporting officers. National advocacy, including important support from Mary McLeod Bethune, resulted in a state prosecution of the Blackwelder brothers, but they were acquitted at trial. CRRJ is pursuing contact with Snell’s relatives. James Sullivan (aka James Couch), accused of raping a woman, was lynched in August 1952 in Chipley. The only evidence linking him to the rape was that he and the man the woman claimed assaulted her both wore a straw hat. Alerted that he was being hunted down, Sullivan hid in a swamp. When the posse found him he was shot five times. A coroner’s jury found the death to be a “justifiable homicide.” Thurgood Marshall’s advocacy for an investigation by state authorities apparently fell on deaf ears in the office of Governor Fuller Warren.

Manuel Williams, 43, was shot to death in October 1939 by Leesburg police officer Floyd Morgan. According to news reports at the time, rumors circulated that Williams was killed because he was due to appear in a civil court matter in which Officer Morgan had an interest. Thurgood Marshall condemned the killing and sought to have the officer prosecuted: “it seems that Mr. William[s] was killed. . . without any cause. . . and that the killing was certainly unjustifiable.” A coroner’s jury cleared the police officer. CRRJ provided the cousins of Manuel Williams, who still reside in Florida, with a file on the case. Gene Workman was allegedly killed in July 1939 in Leesburg by Deputy
Sheriff Charles Stinson who reportedly told a bartender that he was going to “kill a god dam [sic] n*****,” and then went to the home of Workman, a deaf-mute, and shot him to death. A coroner’s jury concluded that the killing was a justifiable homicide by an officer “acting in the line of duty.” Thurgood Marshall sought an investigation by Florida authorities, apparently in vain. Henry Woods was lynched in Hamilton County in June 1932. Woods killed the chief of the Jasper police, who was attempting to arrest him, and then escaped. A manhunt was organized, and after a number of days Woods was found on a farm near Jasper. According to an account by a resident familiar with the details of the lynching, Woods’ body was riddled with bullets, then sliced up by members of the mob, and placed on a burning brush heap. Throughout the night, residents from across Hamilton County came to witness the event. CRRJ’s investigation turned up original documents relating to the lynching.

CRRJ Students Katherine Terenzi and Alexandra Mahabir with Attorney John Due and Urban League representative Curtis Taylor in Tallahassee. Terenzi and Mahabir conducted field work on the lynching case of Richard Hawkins and Ernest Ponder.
Louisiana

Chrispon Charles, Jr., 20 and a WW II veteran, was killed by New Orleans police officers on July 4, 1949. Chrispon Charles, Sr. had called the police to give his son, who had been aimless since leaving the service, a “lesson.” Police arrived and while Charles Sr. stood by, they shoved the victim into the back seat of their cruiser and shot him. Charles, Sr. pleaded with the officers to spare his son’s life, but to no avail. CRRJ interviewed several members of the Charles family in New Orleans and Atlanta. (See featured cases for more on Chrispon Charles).

Wilmer Smith, 39, was shot to death by New Orleans police officers in January 1941. In 1930, Smith was arrested in connection with the shooting death of a New Orleans police officer, but he was released from custody because there was insufficient evidence to charge him. Upon his release Smith left New Orleans and made a life for himself in Detroit. In December 1940, Louisiana officials learned of Smith’s whereabouts in Michigan and pursued extradition on the old 1930 murder charge. With the help of the NAACP Smith fought extradition but the Michigan governor eventually signed the warrant. Two New Orleans detectives, William Grosch and Andrew Arnold, arrested Smith in Detroit and booked him on the murder charge in New Orleans. The detectives then took Smith “for a ride,” allegedly to find the revolver from the 1930 murder. The detectives shot and killed Smith in Jefferson Parish on the same day he was returned from Detroit. The officers claimed they acted in self-defense and faced no sanctions.

J. Leo Hardy died as a result of injuries received in a beating by law enforcement officials in New Iberia in May 1944. Hardy was an NAACP organizer. Parish officials objected to the chapter’s efforts to start a welding school for African Americans with federal funds. They forced the school to close its doors. The sheriff detained Hardy and a teacher from the school; the two were severely beaten by his deputies. They packed their families up and left town, but Hardy never recovered. He passed away a few months after the assault. CRRJ interviewed residents of New Iberia who recall the events.
Mississippi

**Elijah Johnson**, 21, was lynched in March 1931 near Vicksburg. Johnson was said to have attacked a 30-year-old woman who was on her way to church with her two young children. A doctor reported that the woman had been treated for a fractured skull and bites on her face and neck, and that she had not been raped. A posse of fifty men chased Johnson down and shot him to death. A coroner’s jury reported that the death was “at the hands of unknown parties.” Jessie Ames of the Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching organized a group of eleven white women to protest the lynching. The group’s letter appealing for “legal action, not jungle procedure” appeared in the *Clarion Ledger*.

**Edgar “Buddy” Wolf**, 38, was shot to death by a deputy sheriff in July 1946 in Collins. Wolf was a patron at a “colored” café when Deputy Sheriff John Lewis came to make a purchase. Wolf annoyed Lewis because he did not give a proper answer when the deputy asked the customers “who just slammed [the café] door?” Lewis shot and killed Wolf in the café. Wolf was married with ten children. The FBI conducted an investigation but brought no action. Lewis was indicted for Wolf’s murder, but his case never went to trial. He was dismissed from his position. CRRJ’s investigation is ongoing. (See featured cases for more on Edgar “Buddy” Wolf). **R. J. Tyrone**, 24, died in March 1935 in Lawrence County. The Tyrone family lived on the same property in the county from the late 19th century. CRRJ interviewed Tyrone’s relatives in California and established a detailed account of land transactions affecting the Tyrones, but the researcher was not able to establish the exact cause of Tyrone’s death, rumored to have been the result of a fight with a neighbor. The researcher on this case is investigating the history of violence, fraud and land loss as it affected a group of African Americans in Lawrence County who trace their forebears to slavery. Of particular interest to the student is the role of federal programs on the relative prosperity of the two racial groups in the county.
Georgia

James Irwing, 25, was lynched in Ocilla on February 1930. The charge against him was the rape and murder of a 16-year-old girl. Irwin became a suspect because he was seen driving a mule along the road where the victim walked on the day of the crime. Irwin was married with a child and worked as a farm hand for the uncle of the murdered girl. A thousand men participated in a manhunt for Irwing, who was arrested by the Irwin County sheriff and then kidnapped by the mob. Irwin was taken to the scene of the rape and murder, tied to a tree, tortured for hours, then shot and burned, all before thousands of spectators. No charges were brought against Irwing’s killers. CRRJ is working with local citizens to fully reconstruct the events. Harrison Johnson, 42, was pistol-whipped and shot to death while in custody in Eatonton in Putnam County in July 1946. Johnson, who was married, worked as a truck driver. Johnson was born in neighboring Greene County, and lived there when he was killed. James W. Oliver, 25 years old and unmarried, was beaten and shot to death by police officers in Savannah in March 1945. Oliver was born in Savannah and had worked at a local dairy for fifteen years before he died. His employer described him as “a boy about whom he would never make himself believe he associated with any criminal activities whatsoever.” On the evening in question, Oliver was walking along a public street when he brushed against a white man who was accompanied by a woman. The man, one Elmer Groves, began to fight with Oliver while the woman claimed Oliver had attacked her. Four police cars and two officers on motorcycles approached, dragged Oliver to a nearby cemetery, where they shot him five times. A coroner’s examination revealed Oliver’s skull had been fractured. The officers were cleared at a Savannah police court proceeding.

Tennessee

Roosevelt Jones, 26, was shot and killed in Dyersburg, TN by a posse in July 1940. It is alleged that Jones was stopped for a traffic violation on the Tennessee-Arkansas line, and shot the arresting officer in the hand. A three-state hunt for Jones ended in Dyersburg when he was shot to death.
Texas

Mott Flourney, 70, was charged with a rape and murder in November 1941 in Lufkin. At his trial in the Angelina County courthouse, the victim’s husband, Roy Morehouse, stepped forward and stabbed Flourney in the chest.

George Hughes, 41, was burned to death by a mob in May 1930 in Sherman in a case that received international publicity. Hughes was accused of committing a particularly brutal rape. The facts suggest that Hughes was employed as a farm laborer by the woman’s husband; allegedly he went to the home to collect overdue wages. After a chase Hughes was arrested for the rape, confined in the Grayson County courthouse, and a special grand jury was convened. On the date set for his trial, a mob surrounded the courthouse and burned it down with Hughes inside. The National Guard was on duty, but could not control the mob. The mob then burned down three blocks of the black business and residential community and chased African Americans out of town. Criminal proceedings were commenced against 14 men, of whom 2 were convicted of rioting and arson. No one was charged in connection with the Hughes homicide. CRRJ students at SULC traveled to Sherman where they interviewed residents and researchers knowledgeable about the events and located unpublished documents.

John Griggs was lynched in Kirbyville, TX in June 1934. He was charged with associating with a white woman. Deputy sheriffs were intercepted by a mob as they sought to transport Griggs to a safer jail. Griggs’ hanging body was fired upon by the mob, cut down and dragged around the county for several hours. CRRJ went to Kirbyville to investigate the lynching. Kenneth R. Long, 24, was shot to death by law enforcement officers in El Campo in February 1946. Long was home on leave from the Navy. The sailor had spent over a year in Guam and had an excellent military reputation. With his brother, who was also in the military, and a cousin, Kenneth Long was purchasing a soft drink at the service station in El Campo when a customer objected that the young men had been disrespectful to his wife because one of them did not have his shirt tucked in. State highway patrol officer apparently killed Kenneth Long at the scene. (see Featured Cases for more on Kenneth Long) Ernest McDay, 16, was killed, possibly by state actors, at the State Juvenile Training School in May 1940. Three weeks earlier, on April 23, McDay and two other youths, Theodia Muldrow and Albert Wesley, Jr., were charged with raping one Denise Grogan in Dallas and stealing items from her home. Because he was a juvenile, McDay faced a maximum sentence of four years while the two others faced the death penalty. Within hours after his arrival at the state juvenile facility – and before the evidence had been tested against any of the defendants - McDay was found dead. The Texas death certificate for the 16-year-old records the cause of death as “coronary thrombosis brought on by endocarditis and gonorrhea.” McDay’s alleged accomplices, who were 19 at the time of the crime, were tried, convicted and executed for the rape several months after McDay’s slaying.
Said to have been the “last mob lynching in Alabama,” this case was the subject of national debate over lynching, but CRRJ’s investigation has for the first time uncovered the full details of the murder. When the battle over the Confederate flag took center stage in the wake of the Charleston, South Carolina murders in June 2015, a social media site in Henry County carried this message: “let it be clear IF ONE BLACK HAND TOUCHES OUR CONFEDERATE MONUMENT we will drag dozens of you through the street and make a example out of you. THAT IS A PROMISE!” While the lynching of Wesley Johnson occurred three-quarters of a century ago, the sentiments motivating that public slaying have apparently not yet been fully extinguished in this rural peanut-farming county of 17,000.

As reported this year to CRRJ by Henry County residents who were either present or heard of the events from relatives, the 18-year-old Johnson, who is remembered as “tall and strong,” refused to heed the warnings of his community, and maintained an affair with a married white woman. When her husband found the two together, the woman denied that the relationship was consensual, and he organized a mob to chase down Johnson. In the meantime, the woman told an older friend that she had, indeed, not been raped. Her admission was for naught. Led by her husband, a mob broke into the county jail, kidnapped Johnson, and took him back to the house where the alleged rape occurred, where they lynched him. A local historian related to CRRJ that for a long time after the lynching, African Americans walked silently in a group to town, so terrified were they. After one grand jury - which included a confederate soldier - refused to return indictments in the murder, the county judge convened a second grand jury. It, too, declined to indict the woman’s husband or anyone else in the mob. Perhaps because the case was reported nationally, Alabama’s Attorney General sought to have Henry County’s sheriff impeached for neglect of duty, “connivance with the mob, and cowardice.” The Alabama Supreme Court acquitted the sheriff (State ex. rel Attorney General v. Corbitt, 234 Ala. 700 (1937), and the Wagner-Nuys anti-lynching bill was not passed.
Buddy Wolf was sitting at a table on a Saturday evening, chatting with neighbors at a local café near Collins, MS, when he was slain because he annoyed a police officer. Deputy Sheriff John Lewis came into the café, purportedly to buy some lard from proprietress Mary Collins, when he heard a door slam behind him. He turned to Buddy Wolf and demanded to know “who slammed the door.” Wolf said he didn’t know, at which point Mrs. Collins said her husband had exited the store and slammed the door behind him. Deputy Lewis turned back to Wolf. “You knew it was James that slammed that door, didn’t you?” Wolf shrugged, and an enraged Lewis went after him with a blackjack. In the ensuing scuffle Lewis shot an unarmed Wolf three times. With her customer lying dead on the café floor, Mrs. Collins sent notice to Wolf’s wife, Catherine. It was left to Catherine Wolf to raise the couple’s ten children. The FBI undertook an investigation, for the case was prosecutable as a federal criminal civil rights crime, but it dropped the matter after local authorities terminated Lewis and arrested him for the homicide. However, CRRJ has established that Lewis was never prosecuted. A farmer, Buddy Wolf had lived in and around Collins all of his life. He was 38 when he was murdered.
Chrispon Charles, Jr.
New Orleans, LA
July 4, 1949

Wanda Charles of Atlanta, GA, Chrispon Charles’ niece, had heard about her uncle’s death at the hands of New Orleans police officers, but she did not possess a photograph of her relative until CRRJ gave her one from a newspaper about the slaying this past July. This devastating killing of a young man with a promising future had a deeply traumatic effect on the close-knit Charles family, and when a CRRJ student interviewed her about the events, she cried. Determined that her children would know their uncle’s story, Wanda Charles gathered together as many relatives as she could find to hear CRRJ’s account of the case in July 2015 at Southern University Law Center.

Chrispon Charles returned from World War II without any clear sense of the future. His father, despairing because his 20-year-old son did not seem to want to get a job, thought he could “scare him straight” by having him arrested. In response to the elder Chrispon Charles’ complaint that his son was disorderly, a police cruiser arrived at the home. Upon finding him at a tavern near his home, the police ordered Charles to get into the cruiser. While his father looked on, Charles protested that he had done nothing wrong, whereupon the officers handcuffed him and forced him into their car. Charles continued
to protest, as a result of which Officer Emry Landry and Elois Shaue shot and killed him. Charles, Sr. pleaded in vain for the officers not to shoot his son. A grand jury investigating the police killing declined to indict the officers. However, the case spawned the New Orleans Citizen’s Committee Against Police Brutality, and the year following Charles’ death, New Orleans finally desegregated its police force. The well-known Louisiana civil rights attorney A.P. Tureaud assisted the Charles family.

Kenneth Long  
El Campo, TX  
February 25, 1946

Two of the eleven children of Robert and Edna Long responded to the call to serve their country during World War II. Kenneth Long enlisted in the Navy when he was 22 years old. Following in his footsteps two years later was his younger brother, Meron, who joined the Army in 1945. After thirty months of active duty, including a long assignment in Guam, Kenneth returned to El Campo to enjoy a 90-day furlough in December 1945. On the day of the incident, February 25, 1946, Meron, too was on furlough. Along with their cousin, the two Long brothers were making a purchase at the gas station in El Campo when a customer in a car complained that the three young men had insulted his wife. “Put your shirttails in!” shouted the customer to one of the three young men, who responded. The customer picked up an iron pipe and began to curse at the group. The three walked away from the station, whereupon they spotted the local sheriff. They hailed him down and returned with him to the station. Once there, Sheriff Gille McLure began to toss around racial taunts. “I have been waiting to kill a n*****,” he said, threateningly. Meron, a highly decorated soldier, was shocked by the sheriff’s words, and told him so. Having earned a Bronze Star in the New Guinea Campaign and several commendations for his service in the Pacific Theater, Meron had re-enlisted at the end of the war. He had learned to stand up for himself. McLure quickly targeted Meron, but as the sheriff attacked him, Meron’s brother, Kenneth intervened, whereupon a highway patrol officer shot Kenneth to death. “One Negro Dead, Two facing Charges As Result of Fight with Local Officers,” read the headline in the El Campo paper.

Kenneth’s brother, Meron returned to the Army. The Long family abandoned their farm, animals and equipment and fled El Campo. So intense was the fear that they could not bury Kenneth in town; his funeral was held in Halletsville. CRRJ interviewed Meron’s wife; she recalled that her husband, now deceased, rarely spoke of the slaying of his brother. A nephew of the Long brothers
reported that when El Campo police learned that that his father was married to one of the Longs, he was also threatened. The NAACP sought a federal investigation without success. The state never pursued charges against the officers.

Family of Kenneth and Meron Long with Jasmine Francois at Grand Rounds SULC, Baton Rouge, 7/10/15.
FIELD WORK

Alexandra Mahabir and Katherine Terenzi worked with community leaders in Tallahassee in researching four cases from that area. They met with researchers, family members, and activists who are seeking to preserve important venues in Tallahassee’s history of resistance to violence and oppression. The case of Hawkins and Ponder figures prominently in this memory project.

Tara Dunn and Go Eun Lee, together with Audrey Adam from the School of Journalism, spent several days in Troup and Harris counties in Georgia investigating a 1947 jailhouse killing of a prominent farmer. They interviewed the victim’s children in Atlanta and made contact with scores of persons who recalled the events.

Larry Frisbe investigated the slaying of Booster Williams, found dead in June 1940, in New Roads, L.A. Rachel Oates, Raymond Wilkes, and Shardae Womack investigated four 1940s-era New Orleans killings in that city’s public libraries and courthouses and the papers of A.P. Tureaud at the Amistad Research Center at Tulane. Rachel Oates and Raymond Wilkes traveled to New Iberia, LA to meet with witnesses who recalled the assault on NAACP leader J. Leo Hardy in May 1944 and the banishment of the town’s
doctors and professionals that year. Ada Goodley took several trips to Plaquemine Parish to investigate the 1931 lynching of Oscar Livingston, who was charged with attempted rape, taken from jail by a mob of masked men, and shot multiple times. She interviewed Livingston’s nephews in their senior years. The family learned the full story of the Livingston case at our Grand Rounds at SULC. She also spent many days researching the lynching case of George Hughes in Sherman, TX. One researcher shared her doctoral thesis on the case and archivists at a local college provided unpublished documents and photographs, including one of Hughes’ charred corpse. Jasmine Francois met with the family of Kenneth and Meron Long in Houston, and they, too, joined us at Grand Rounds.

 Relatives of Oscar Livingston, Lynched in Plaquemine Parish, August 1931, Join CRRJ/SULC’s Ada Goodley, (4 from l.) Baton Rouge, 7/10/15.

CRLS students meet with Professor Marvin Dunn in Miami. Investigating 1942 killing of Grant Johnson by Miami-Dade deputy sheriffs.

 Relatives of Oscar Livingston, Lynched in Plaquemine Parish, August 1931, Join CRRJ/SULC’s Ada Goodley, (4 from l.) Baton Rouge, 7/10/15.
SPECIAL PROJECTS

CRRJ sponsored a clinic at Southern University Law Center, Baton Rouge, L.A. Students worked full-time for six weeks on a caseload that required extensive field work in Louisiana, Texas, and Arkansas. The researchers presented their work at a scholarly roundtable, and to an audience of law students and faculty on July 10. Several families whose cases were on the summer clinic docket attended the grand rounds presentation.
CRRJ organized an evening of poetry and music to honor the victims of the Charleston shootings. Held on June 23 at Northeastern, the event included the poets Sonia Sanchez and Robert Pinsky, and musicians Stan Strickland and Nedelka Prescod.

Poets Nicole Terez Dutton, Danielle LeGros Georges, Afaa Michael Weaver, Sonia Sanchez, Robert Pinsky. Below L, Pinksy and Stan Strickland. R, Sonia Sanchez
The Kimbrough Scholars Program

CRRJ partners with Cambridge Rindge and Latin School to help high school students conduct cold-case investigations of racially-motivated killings. The joint project connects students with hands-on learning experience in American history and law. In 2015, CRRJ’s Fellow Chelsea Schmitz worked with eight Kimbrough Scholars. The team investigated the 1942 murder of Grant Johnson. Johnson ran a store in Dade County. Deputy sheriffs accused him of keeping the establishment open after hours. The disagreement escalated and the deputies killed Johnson and severely beat his co-proprietor. The Kimbrough Scholars gathered documents about the case in Boston and then traveled to the Miami area, where they interviewed local activists; searched library archives for additional coverage of the case; and sought public records. They also visited archival museums dedicated to the historical preservation of Overton and Coconut Grove, two historically black communities. And they met with young racial justice activists in the Miami area.

American Soldiers, Racially Motivated Homicides and WW II
CRRJ maintains the most comprehensive archive of materials documenting the violence experienced by African American soldiers, whether on the base or off, during World War II. In 2015 we expanded the database considerably and conducted rigorous investigations into several cases. Among other matters, this year we expanded our files on the cases of George Andrews (dod 3/44, Hattiesburg); Thomas Broadus (2/42, Fort Mead); Raymond Carr (11/42, Fort Beauregard); Thomas Foster (3/42, Little Rock); Felix Hall (2/41, Fort Benning); Willie Jullis (’42, El Paso); Albert King (3/41, Fort Benning); Raymond McMurray (3/44, Gadsden); Henry Williams (10/42, Mobile).
CRRJ in the news

"Commemoration for a purpose," news@Northeastern (November 7, 2015)
"What We Can Learn From Sandra Bland's Tragic End," NPR's Cognoscenti (July 28, 2015)
"We Are All Hurt," news@Northeastern (June 24, 2015)
"Baltimore Wasn't The First City To Burn, And It Won't Be The Last," NPR's Cognoscenti (May 1, 2015)
"Professor Margaret Burnham Comments on the Walter Scott Case," Al Jazeera English (April 9, 2015)

"Truth and Reconciliation is Coming to America From the Grassroots," The Guardian (February 26, 2015)

"Law Student Limelight: Hannah Adams, Northeastern University," Lawdragon Campus (January 15, 2015)

"A trip back to Atlanta’s Streetcars in the Jim Crow Era," The Atlanta-Journal Constitution (January 2, 2015)

CRRJ 2015 Students
ABOUT US

Margaret Burnham, Director. Rose Zoltek-Jick, Associate Director. Chelsea Schmitz, Fellow (through July). Nancy Earsy, Editor.

CRRJ at NUSL School of Journalism Michael Beaudet, Laurel Leff. CRRJ at MIT Melissa Nobles. CRRJ at SULC John Pierre, Angela Bell. CRRJ at CRLS Kimbrough Scholars Larry Aaronson, Sally Benbasset, Kathleen Fitzgerald, Poppy Milner, Janet Moses, Diane Tabor, Gail Willet.

Honorary Advisors Rita Bender, David Dennis, Robert P. Moses, Charles Ogletree, Ruby Sales, Hollis Watkins.

NU Faculty Advisors Brook Baker, Karl Klare, Hope Lewis, Daniel Medwed, Michael Meltsner, James Rowan, Emily Spieler.

Board of Advisors Ifetayo Belle, Janeen Blake, Tasmin Din, Geraldine Hines, Bonnie Kanter, Melissa Nobles, Rashida Richardson, James Rowan, Kaylie Simon.


CONTRIBUTE

We rely on donors like you to continue our work. Donations are used for litigation expenses, field research, and reconciliation and restorative justice projects. With your help we can continue training tomorrow’s civil rights lawyers, filling in the gaps in American history, and enriching our national dialogue about race and criminal justice.

Visit www.northeastern.edu/law/giving and choose to donate to the Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Project, or send us a check made out to NUSL-CRRJ at:

Northeastern University School of Law; Civil Rights and Restorative Justice; 416 Huntington Avenue, Boston, MA 02115

Email: crrj@neu.edu; Tel: (617)373-8243

http://www.northeastern.edu/civilrights